



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
McDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

November 7, 2013

**Florence Ely Nelson Desert Park
8950 E. Pinnacle Peak Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85255**

MINUTES

PRESENT: James Heitel, Chairman
Fred Klein, Vice Chairman
Marg Nelssen, Commissioner
Con Englehorn, Commissioner
Mike Milillo, Commissioner
Susan Wheeler, Commissioner

ABSENT: Robert Frost, Commissioner

STAFF: Bill Murphy
Kroy Ekblaw
Scott Hamilton
Claire Miller
Robbin Schweitzer
Liz Hildenbrand
John Loleit

GUESTS: Mike Nolan
Jack McEnroe
David Hay
Mike Mayer
David Letourneau
Carole Burton
Lorraine Montuori
John Holmes
Melanie Tluczek

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Heitel called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members present as noted above.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT** (Begins at 5:04, approximately 1 minute into the meeting)

John Holmes spoke about the City's responsibility for maintaining the habitat in the Preserve and requested that the Commission find resources that can be used to aid in that effort.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** (Begins at 5:08, approximately 5 minutes into the meeting)

Approval of the Regular Meeting minutes of October 3, 2013

COMMISSIONER ENGLEHORN MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 3, 2013 MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER NELSEN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). COMMISSIONER FROST WAS ABSENT.

5. **MCDOWELL SONORAN CONSERVANCY UPDATE** (Begins at 5:09, approximately 6 minutes into the meeting)

Mike Nolan reviewed MSC activities highlighting the construction and maintenance program in which select stewards were trained as crew leaders, enabling them to form crews and schedule projects outside of the normal MSC hours. It is anticipated that the scheduling flexibility will attract new Stewards.

6. **OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE MASTER PLAN (RMP) STATUS AND PROCESS** (Begins at 5:10, approximately 7 minutes into the meeting)

- **RMP Outline which includes, but not limited to:**
 - **MSC Flora and fauna Reports**
 - **Arizona Game and Fish Wildlife Crossing Study**
 - **Existing Wildlife Water Sources Map**

Ms. Hildenbrand discussed the status and the initial process of developing the Resource Management Master Plan, which will be a tool in planning future management actions, meeting envisioned resource goals, and establishing a process for continuous monitoring and evaluation. Volumes will include an Ecological Resource Plan, a Land Acquisition Plan, Cultural Resources, Recreation, and Public Safety. Each volume will contain topical subchapters.

- **MSC Flora and Fauna Reports**

Melanie Tluczek, MSC Field Institute Manager, presented information on the early stages of the Ecological Resource Plan Component, which includes baseline data on the

flora and fauna surveys that began in January of 2011. The document is being created in close partnership with the City and the steward group. She noted that as sections of the Ecological Resource Plan are completed, the drafts will be reviewed by the Science Advisory Committee, which includes two professionals from the Ecological Planning Group.

Commissioners were given the opportunity to ask questions.

- **Arizona Game and Fish Wildlife Crossing Study**

Mr. Ekblaw distributed copies of the baseline study produced by Arizona Game and Fish entitled "Identification of Wildlife Road Mortality Hotspots and Wildlife Activity Patterns within the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve Wildlife Linkage." The study will be used as part of the process in determining the appropriate way to manage wildlife crossings in the area of Rio Verde, Dynamite, and 128th Street. Mr. Ekblaw noted that the current Transportation Master Plan and General Plan identify Dynamite and Rio Verde as six lanes, but it is anticipated to be adjusted based on studies such as the wildlife activity patterns and updated population and traffic projections.

Commissioners were given the opportunity to ask questions.

- **Existing Wildlife Water Sources Map**

Mr. Ekblaw presented a map of the well sites that are thought to be in the Preserve. Meetings will be held with Water Resources and the City Attorney to discuss unique aspects of the resources and water rights.

Mike Mayer discussed the importance of keeping the wildlife corridor between the McDowell Mountain Regional Park and the Preserve open. He noted that the McDowell Mountain Regional Park still allows wildlife hunting with a shotgun for dove and quail.

7. STAFF REPORTS (Begins at 5:53, approximately 50 minutes into the meeting)

- **Trail Standards**

Ms. Hildenbrand recapped the October discussion on sustainable trails and discussed the trails survey that kicked off on October 19th. She noted that turn radius standards are being evaluated based on user input.

Scott Hamilton discussed the steps used to evaluate existing trails and reviewed the four trail classifications.

Lorraine Montuori spoke about trail issues relating to mountain biking and stressed the importance of sight lines and creating a stacked trail system with designated areas for specific users. She offered the assistance of volunteers from the Cave Creek Bicycling Association in designing the trails.

Carole Burton mentioned that as part of the patrol program she participated in the trails review and thanked staff for being receptive to user input.

David Letourneau discussed the importance of keeping as many of the existing trails as possible, creating a stacked trail system with a variety of challenging routes, and hiring an experienced trail consultant.

Discussion ensued regarding multiuse trails versus separating trails by user, working with a consultant specialized in mountain biking, a stacked trail system, sight lines, and turn radius. Mr. Hamilton noted that the trail builders were hired based on experience and both have extensive experience in building multiuse trails.

- **Commercial Tours Status Update**

Ms. Hildenbrand provided an update on the status of the temporary motorized vehicles usage ranging from September through October. In addition, she reported on the usage results recorded by the trail counters along the route ranging from September 18th through October. Trail counters include all users and do not differentiate between those users entering and exiting the area.

- **Review Alternative Future Funding Report to City Council from March 2012**

Mr. Ekblaw reviewed the alternative future funding for future land acquisitions report that was presented to Council in March of 2012 highlighting the recommendations section. He discussed the key differences that have occurred since the presentation in March of 2012, including acquisitions that have occurred and an increase in the amount of available funding.

- **Preliminary Funding Assessment Discussion re: Priority 1 and 1a**

Mr. Ekblaw noted that Council approved the Commission's recommendation to pursue parcels 1 and 1a, which were previously identified to be approximately \$100,000 an acre, updated projections based on actual sales tax, sale of bonds, and updated sales tax should be available for presentation to the Commission in March of 2014.

- **Land Acquisition Status 2013/2014**

Mr. Ekblaw mentioned that Council will hold an executive session on November 12th to discuss bidding instructions and the State Land Department will be holding an auction on November 19th.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS (Begins at 6:56, approximately 1 hour and 54 minutes into the meeting)

Ms. Hildenbrand confirmed that the signs that refer to the Preserve as a "Park" have been removed.

Vice-Chair Klein requested that Preserve activities be included as part of the Parks online bulletin or that the Preserve be given a dedicated online bulletin.

Commissioner Wheeler commended the Brown's Ranch Event.

Commissioner Englehorn stressed the importance of working together with the mountain biking community in designing the new trail system.

9. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FEBRUARY 6, 2014 AND REVIEW ITEMS THROUGH JUNE 2014 (Begins at 7:01, approximately 1 hour and 58 minutes into the meeting)

- Annual Ethics Training
- Elect chair and Vice Chair
- Review Bylaws
- Annual Report to City Council for 2013
- Hunting Update (COS, AZG&F, MSC)
 - Results of 2013-14 Season
 - Results of January Large Mammal Survey
 - Discuss 2014-15 Season Policies and Controls

Mr. Ekblaw distributed the draft - MSPC proposed agenda items for 2013/14 season and explained that one reason the Commission elected to eliminate the December and January regular Commission meetings is because of difficulty in achieving a quorum during the holiday season. He reminded the Commissioners that a special meeting can be held during those months if necessary.

A Commissioner requested that an update on the Preserve History be agendaized for the next meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.